

TC Project Screening Checklist – Early Planning Stage
National Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine Network in Ghana

What is the problem/need/opportunity? What information/data is available regarding the scope of the problem?

High incidence of cancer and extremely limited facilities for diagnosis and treatment, especially among the public hospitals. Particularly true with regard to cancers that affect women. Ghana has a population of 14.3 million and no public facilities for radiotherapy.

What priority does the institution/Government assign to this problem/need/opportunity, and what information is this based on?

Government has identified establishment of public facilities for detection and treatment of cancer, especially among women, as a high priority. Facilities established could also serve neighboring countries such as Togo, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. Government has established a national steering committee with the President's wife as Chairperson.

What part of the problem/need/opportunity would the proposed project address?

Proposed project would establish nuclear medicine and radiotherapy (brachytherapy and teletherapy) treatment facilities at three hospitals, one in the capital Accra, one in the second largest urban center, Kumasi, and the third in city in the north of the country, Tamale. Facilities would serve at least most of the population of the country.

What would be the impact of the project itself?

Treatment would be available for thousands of patients every year. In many cases the effect would be limited to palliation because of the lack of a programme of early detection. In addition to the direct health effects, the facilities would give a boost to public morale and stability. Highly visible example of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Assuming success, what would be the impact of the project on the overall problem/need/opportunity?

No estimates are available on the percentage of cancer cases that could be treated.

What data or estimates support these impact projections?

Would the proposed project be supported by the institution/Government? If so, to what extent?

The Government will provide suitable infrastructure (building space, constructed if necessary). Government will provide normal operating costs and establish a (graduated) fee structure to sustain the services after IAEA assistance ends. Government will identify candidates suitable for advanced training as radiotherapists, medical physicists, radiation technologists, etc.

Is there – or is it expected that there might be – interest in this project in international development agencies or international institutes currently operating in the country? What agencies or institutes? What information indicates possible interest?

WHO provides assistance in establishing early detection programmes, education programmes, cancer registries, etc. Collaboration would be expected.

Would the nuclear technologies available through the IAEA be the best means available to achieve the goal of the project?

Radiotherapy is clearly one of the essential means of cancer treatment. No other international organization supports the purchase of radiotherapy equipment or the related nuclear medicine facilities and capabilities needed.

Who would be the “end user” in the proposed project, i.e. the person or body who would ultimately apply the technology to bring about social or economic impact?

End User would be the three hospitals. Technology (equipment, professional training, and expert services) would be provided to the three hospitals. The result of the project would be operating facilities and trained personnel. This result would immediately be applied by the hospitals by treating patients on a daily basis.